

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A computer system comprising:
a storage medium having stored therein a plurality of programming instructions to implement a set of communication services on the computer system for generating on behalf of an offeror client, an electronic token representing an offer to participate in a voice call with a destination party designated by the offeror client, the electronic token to be transmitted by the offeror client in association with an electronic mail message to an offeree, services for receiving on behalf of the offeror client, through a data network link, a notification from the offeree denoting the offeree's acceptance of the offeror client's offer, and services for causing a voice call to be established between the destination party designated by the offeror client and the offeree in response to the offeree's acceptance of the offeror client's offer; and
an execution unit coupled to the storage medium for executing the plurality of programming instructions.
2. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the offeree accepts the offeror client's offer by activating the electronic token displayed on the offeree's computer system.
3. The computer system of claim 2, wherein activating the electronic token comprises selecting the electronic token with a user input device.

4. The computer system of claim 2, wherein the electronic token comprises a graphical icon.
5. The computer system of claim 2, wherein the electronic token comprises an URL.
6. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the voice call comprises at least one of a circuit switched call and a packet based call.
7. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the services for causing the voice call to be established between the destination party designated by the offeror client and the offeree, comprise services for causing a first voice call to be established with the offeree, services for causing a second voice call to be established with the destination party designated by the offeror client, and services for causing the first and second voice calls to be bridged to place the offeree and the destination party designated by offeror client in voice communication with each other.
8. The computer system of claim 7, wherein the destination party designated by the offeror client is the offeror client.
9. The computer system of claim 7, wherein the first and second voice calls each comprise a circuit switched call.

10. The computer system of claim 7, wherein the first voice call comprises a circuit switched call and the second voice call comprises a packet based call.

11. The computer system of claim 7, wherein the first voice call comprises a packet based call and the second voice call comprises a circuit switched call.

12. The computer system of claim 7, wherein the first and second voice calls each comprise a packet based call.

13. The computer system of claim 7, wherein the electronic token is generated on behalf of the offeror client based at least in part upon data provided to the computer system by the offeror client, the data associated with at least one of a PSTN extension corresponding to the destination party designated by the offeror client and a PSTN extension corresponding to the offeree.

14. The computer system of claim 13, wherein the PSTN extension corresponding to the offeror client is obscured to prevent the offeree from identifying the PSTN extension associated with the destination party designated by the offeror client.

15. The computer system of claim 7, further comprising programming instructions to implement services for receiving payment information from the offeror client in association with at least one of the first and second calls, and services for verifying the

ability of the offeror client to pay an indicated amount, prior to causing the first and second voice calls to be bridged.

16. A method comprising:

transmitting by an offeror party in association with an electronic mail message, an electronic token representing an offer to participate in a voice call with a destination party;

receiving by an offeree party, the electronic token representing the offer to participate in the voice call with the destination party; and

bridging the voice call between the offeree party and the destination party, based at least in part upon the offeree party accepting the offer to participate in the voice call.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the offeree party accepts the offer to participate in the voice call by activating the electronic token representing the offer.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein activating the electronic token includes selecting the electronic token with a user input device.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the electronic token comprises a graphical icon.

20. The method of claim 17, wherein the electronic token comprises an URL.

21. The method of claim 16, wherein the destination party is the offeror party.

22. The method of claim 16, wherein the voice call comprises at least one of a circuit switched call and a packet based call.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein bridging the voice call further comprises:
establishing a first PSTN call with the offeree;
establishing a second PSTN call with the destination party; and
bridging the first and the second PSTN calls.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein bridging the voice call further comprises:
establishing a first PSTN call with the offeree;
establishing a second VIOP call with the destination party; and
bridging the first PSTN call and the second VIOP call.

25. The method of claim 22, wherein bridging the voice call further comprises:
establishing a first VIOP call with the offeree;
establishing a second PSTN call with the destination party; and
bridging the first VIOP call and the second PSTN call.

26. The method of claim 22, wherein bridging the voice call further comprises:
establishing a first VIOP call with the offeree;
establishing a second VIOP call with the destination party; and
bridging the first and the second VIOP calls.

27. The method of claim 16, wherein the electronic token is generated by a third party based at least in part upon data provided to the third party by the offeror party in association with a contractual relationship previously established between the third party and the offeror party.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein the data provided to the third party by the offeror party includes a first PSTN extension corresponding to the offeree party and a second PSTN extension corresponding to the destination party.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the second PSTN extension is obscured to prevent the offeree party from identifying the second PSTN extension.

30. The method of claim 27, wherein the data provided to the third party includes billing information.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the voice call is bridged only after payment verification is received by the third party from an independent party assuring that the offeror party will pay for the cost of the call.

32. A computer system comprising:

a storage medium having stored therein a plurality of programming instructions to implement a set of communication services on the computer system for receiving on

behalf of an offeror client, through a data network link, a notification from an offeree denoting the offeree's acceptance of the offeror client's offer to participate in a voice call with a designated destination party, the offer communicated to the offeree in association with an electronic mail message, and for causing the voice call to be established between the designated destination party and the offeree in response to the offeree's acceptance of the offeror client's offer; and

an execution unit coupled to the storage medium for executing the plurality of programming instructions.

33. The computer system of claim 32, wherein destination party is designated by the offeror.

34. The computer system of claim 32, wherein the offeree party accepts the offer to participate in the voice call by activating the electronic token representing the offer.

35. The computer system of claim 32, wherein the services for causing the voice call to be established between the designated destination party and the offeree, comprise services for causing a first voice call to be established with the offeree, for causing a second voice call to be established with the designated destination party, and for causing the first and second voice calls to be bridged to place the offeree and the designated destination party in voice communication with each other.

36. A computer system comprising:

an execution unit coupled to the storage medium for executing the plurality of programming instructions.

add
EI

[illegible]